

SCAAC Meeting Minutes

(School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council)

January 7, 1999
State Board Room

SCAAC Agenda

#	Agenda Items	Presenters
1.	Meeting Minutes	Anne Keene
2.	School Report Card	Angela Wilkins/ Laura Graham
3.	Accountability Model	Dr. Wilmer S. Cody
4.	Dropout Rates	Anne Keene
5.	Reward Points Chart	Robyn Oatley
6.	District Accountability	Benny Lile
Adjournment		

SCAAC Meeting Minutes
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Copies of audiotapes of the meeting are available upon request.
Chairman Anne Keene called the meeting to order. The roll was called.

Members Present:

Suzanne Guyer	Gary Mielcarek	John Stephens
Maxie Johnson	Roger Pankratz	Maynard Thomas
Anne Keene	Bob Sexton	Sharon Whitworth
Benny Lile	Linda Sheffield	

Eleven Members were present and a quorum was present.

1. Meeting Minutes

Anne Keene

Chairperson Anne Keene gave the topic for the meeting—district accountability. She also summarized the work from Wednesday's meeting dealing with the inclusion of special populations in statewide assessment and accountability. Anne also announced that the Council would hear a report from Bob Sexton on the article in Education Week.

Meeting time: 3 hours and 45 minutes.

2. School Report Card

**Angela Wilkins/
Laura Graham**

Angela Wilkins and Laura Graham to shared with the Council the changes made to the school report card work in progress. Angela noted that she and Laura had presented at the recent District Assessment Coordinators' conference in Louisville, and that they had been given some useful feedback. At this point, Angela lead the Council through the most recent versions of the high school report card document. All Council members were given copies of the report card to follow along with Angela. After presenting the changes in the report cards, Angela shared the concerns from the District Assessment Coordinators collected during the conference. Some of the concerns from the District Assessment Coordinators included who would be responsible for collecting the information and the time line for delivery of the report card. Laura Graham then lead the Council through a handout of Proposed Report Card Timelines.

Bob Sexton noted that it seemed problematic for the Council to comment on this version of the Tier 1 report card without seeing what is proposed on the Tier 2 document. It was agreed that this would be the case and that as soon as any work is done on Tier 2 the Council would receive copies for review. Robyn Oatley briefly discussed what her division would be doing with report cards.

Some concern about who would pay the costs associated with report card distribution was raised, and it was determined that districts would be responsible for these costs since House Bill 53 did not provide any budget for this part of the legislation.

The Council took time to respond to the report card presentation by Angela Wilkins and Laura Graham. Generally, the Council members agreed that the report card should be very user-friendly and professionally presented as to the printing and format presentation. Jerry Lunney offered his observation that perhaps the Council should consider not only what they think parents want to see but also consider what they might need to focus on and get involved with.

Report Card Subcommittee:

Bob Sexton said that his subcommittee on report card would need to meet and discuss the latest work on the report card so that the Council could provide feedback as soon as possible. He asked if staff could assist the subcommittee with a meeting in February. Anne Keene noted that in summary the subcommittee will meet after the focus groups on the report card meet to discuss the changes and provide feedback from the Council. Council members who have other changes or suggestions may give those to Angela and/or Laura.

Education Week Article:

Bob Sexton lead the Council through the article in Education Week on the ranking and report card for states' education programs. Each Council member was given a copy of the report.

3. Accountability Model

Dr. Wilmer S. Cody

At this point, Chairperson Anne Keene asked if the Council wanted to draw up an official response to the Kentucky Board of Education regulation dealing with the accountability model based on the lengthy discussion from yesterday's session.

General Reactions to the Regulation:

1. Roger Pankratz: feels the group needs time to go to their constituents and ask for feedback; he feels that the regulation is a very important and that the Council needs to have feedback from others; he also feels that he needs to have more time to give it fuller consideration for thoughtful input.
2. Anne Keene: noted the short time for a reaction based on when Kentucky Board of Education will be meeting next to discuss the regulation; she suggested that it might be possible to do something electronically Kentucky Tele-Linking Network to respond to the regulation and offer meaningful feedback.
3. John Stephens: felt unsure of what time constraints exists but wonders if the Council could go through the sections of the regulation and respond to them; he asked if it were possible for the Council to get back together before the Kentucky Board of Education work session.

4. Maynard Thomas: agrees with Roger that there is more to the response here than just the thoughts of individual Council members; he feels this should include the ideas from those the Council members represent.
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The Chair called a short break after which the Council will work for one hour on some general feedback on the Kentucky Board of Education accountability regulation. The Council recessed.

Chairperson Anne Keene reconvened the Council and began the one hour work session on drafting some responses to the Kentucky Board of Education accountability regulation. She also noted that she had spoken to Dr. Cody over the recess, and he told Anne that feedback was exactly what the Board wanted.

Over-riding Concerns:

1. Bob Sexton—the two levels of rewards with the concern that there is the potential of diluting the funding so that there would not be significant money available for rewards, that the amount would be so small that it would be very little.
2. Roger Pankratz—concern over the beginning point and the progressing line on the model.

Dr. Cody joined the Council; Anne Keene recognized him for comments to the Council concerning Kentucky Board of Education's work with the accountability model regulation.

Dr. Cody explained to the Council the process of how the department promulgates regulations. He said that philosophically KERA intended to value what schools did well and to see how they performed against the standards which were set. Furthermore, he spoke about the straight line model and its origin and how to deal with a margin of error as it concerns schools that get very close to a line and the whole issue of fairness; another area of concern is the scale which went from 0 to 40. Dr. Cody's advice is that the Council look at the parts of the regulation and come up with feedback or generalizations or other advice the Council would offer Kentucky Board of Education. John Stephens suggested that the Council reinforce what it feels should stay in the regulation and which parts they feel most strongly about.

After Dr. Cody spoke, the Council went back to its work on concerns.

1. John Stephens—change the terminology of the levels of progress or status on the model.
2. Sue Rigney—suggested the term "celebration points" and what the rewards might be at those points.
3. Bob Sexton—asked what the law mandated after 2000 on rewards. Anne Keene noted that the law says that there would be a system of rewards but that the

reward might or might not be just financial rewards to schools. There is some implication that at some point money would be allocated in a budget to be part of the rewards system.

Bob Sexton asked if the intent or desire was to have a continuation of financial rewards at some funding level. Dr. Cody expressed his opinion that the intent is indeed to have financial rewards and to arrive at a system to distribute the reward funds.

Anne Keene expressed her concern again with use of terminology that uses "level" which might indicate something the Council does not think is positive or desirable. Celebration points seems a more positive term. Anne noted that the Council's intent had been that there would be short term and long term rewards. Maxie Johnson added that she felt that the lowest performing schools would be receiving aid at any rate and would not be on the short end of the stick, noting that there is assistance for those low performing schools at the very lowest end of the scale. Bob Sexton asked if the Council wanted to advise that there be consideration of some other kinds of rewards besides financial rewards.

Anne Keene expressed her concern that for rewards to be perceived meaningful they must also be significant. The discussion turned to pace-setter schools and how they would be rewarded for being in the top percentage of the index. Maynard Thomas felt that pace-setter schools may not need the money as much as other schools and that they might need something other than financial assistance--they may be in a two reward situation anyway.

Helen Mountjoy, Chairperson of Kentucky Board of Education, was present and explained that a board member had voiced concern that there should be some reward for excellence, as well as, for progress. She explained that if the state were rewarding a school for excellence then we should be sure that school is achieving at some upper threshold to quality; for example, is a top score of 40 worthy of such recognition for excellence—this would be the case for example if the top 5% of middle schools in the state were recognized for excellence. Helen noted that Kentucky Board of Education had not actually settled on a 5% number but rather had mentioned using something different such as the top ten schools rather than the top 5% of schools. This would be far different than using the 5% factor. Bob Sexton noted that he would vote to give pace-setter schools financial rewards. Linda Sheffield expressed her concern that schools reaching an index of 75 would be held harmless after that and that perhaps that was not a high enough standard for safe zone. Linda suggested that perhaps that should be adequate for now but that it should move up as the pace-setter schools move upward. She suggests that the Council might advise to set the number at 75 now and then move it to a percentile attached to the pace-setter schools achievement as time goes on. Linda's idea is to use whichever number is higher, either the 75 index or the percentage whichever is higher. This would allow a dynamic tension to encourage schools to keep achieving and not resting on past levels of progress. Linda Sheffield suggested the use of paper work reduction for pace-setter schools as a way to reward them once they reach an index of 75 or above.

4. Dropout Rates

Anne Keene

Anne Keene raised the issue of dropouts since the time allocated for this discussion was expiring in the next five minutes; however, she noted that there were 13 days of conversations that the Council members could have before the actual Kentucky Board of Education work session. In particular Scott Trimble has asked the Council to look at the language in the dropout section of the regulation. The new regulation proposes that schools must have a dropout rate which is equal to the state average in order to be eligible for rewards. Helen Mountjoy noted the board wanted a stringent standard of low dropout rates. The Council discussed the issues. Under the Kentucky Board of Education mode, schools that are above the state average could be rewarded as long as they are getting better or making progress. Maynard Thomas recommends that the Council stay with the recommendation they had previously made.

Maxie Johnson noted that in large systems like Jefferson County this is a continuing problem and one they constantly work on, so she feels the 6% until 2002 is something that gives those larger districts something they can actually have a shot at accomplishing. Maxie supports the Council's original recommendation.

Benny Lile mentioned his concern about grade level configuration problems, and he wishes to list that as a concern especially the sixth grade problem.

SCAAC Noted:

Maynard Thomas noted that the Council had intended to address parental involvement in the accountability index. He noted that the Council had tabled that consideration until Sharon Whitworth was in attendance.

Anne Keene noted that that would be put on the agenda for March and they could do a presentation then. Helen Mountjoy noted that the Board would need to have any information or recommendations on these issues by the meeting on the 20th since the Board hopes to take action at their February meeting.

5. Reward Points Chart

Robyn Oatley

Time for the discussion expired and the Chair summarized the list generated. Robyn Oatley did a set of charts during the discussion and those are part of this record even though the discussion is also part of the narrative of the meeting minutes above.

Linda Sheffield asked for a point of clarification on the levels of rewards points on the chart; Anne Keene clarified her point that she was not talking about levels of reward but rather that she disagreed that schools below the reward line should be receiving rewards. In other words, there should only be one point on the model at which schools would be eligible for rewards.

6. District Accountability

Benny Lile

Anne Keene moved to the next item on the agenda—district accountability. The Council members were each furnished with a "District Accountability Issue Worksheet" prepared for the discussion by the subcommittee on district accountability. It was noted that the Council had received background information previous to today's meeting. Anne recognized Benny Lile for a discussion based on his subcommittee's work. Benny Lile said that the discussion centered on district leadership and what part that should play in district accountability. Benny noted that the subcommittee feels that beyond students' scores the central office and school leadership team should also be accountable. The question is how a scholastic audit could be effective in this accountability determination. The problem is with self-reporting which would mean all districts would likely be reporting success; so it would seem that some kind of consistent audit would be the way to approach this problem. In short could there be some way to hold every teacher both in accountability grades and non-accountability grades and all leadership accountable in some way that would be fair and consistent. Can we use district accountability to include all personnel and make them feel a part of the entire process.

Anne Keene went back to the basic question: should there be district accountability? Benny Lile's subcommittee recommends that there should be that the options should be pursued.

Rationale for this decision:

1. Easier to work with schools when all are accountable and that avoids any disconnect in the system where some feel that they are not part of the system; this would create a complete system where all are stakeholders in the accountability process.
2. Leverage is given to those who can say they are accountable and that means those may seek training and generate a feeling that the entire district is working together in the accountability process.
3. Gaining support to and for schools; support for instruction.

SCAAC Concerns/Discussion/Questions:

What should a district be held accountable for? Maynard Thomas asked if administrators were responsible for as much professional development as teachers are; Anne Keene noted that they were. The subcommittee listed the following in its report as to what districts should be accountable for: providing services to each school; providing financial services/support; maintaining facilities; providing instructional in-service, evaluation of principals; communicating information to schools; providing structure/purpose for instructional improvement.

At this point Anne Keene brought up concerns from the districts. Districts asked how they can be held accountable when they don't have the power, when the School-Based-Decision-Making Council has the power to make the decisions at the school level.

Discussion followed. John Stephens noted that there is actually already some accountability.

Suzanne Guyer asked if it would be practical to ask the schools to do an evaluation of the district; perhaps provide a checklist for the schools to use. Maxie Johnson noted that in Jefferson County the schools already do such an evaluation. This evaluation is given by staff; classified and certified staff; students; and parents. The worksheet provided also asked how should the district accountability index be calculated. The list included: aggregation of student performance within the district; and a measure based on the performance of each.

Chairperson Anne Keene asked if the subcommittee could review the discussion and be prepared to bring this back to the table at the March meeting of the Council.

Adjournment

SCAAC Motion:

Suzanne Guyer moved for adjournment; Maxie Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried without opposition; the Council adjourned.